

sick of it. But I am not going to stop, not while this is happening to my home State of Rhode Island.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1926

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Thursday, January 30, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1926, with the time until 11:15 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the final 10 minutes equally divided between Senator MENENDEZ or his designee, and Senator TOOMEY or his designee, with Senator TOOMEY controlling the final 5 minutes; that at 11:15 a.m., the Senate proceed to votes in relation to the following amendments: Toomey amendment No. 2707, as modified; Coburn amendment No. 2697; Merkley amendment No. 2709, as modified; and Heller amendment No. 2700; further, that upon disposition of the Heller amendment, the Senate recess until 2 p.m.; at 2 p.m. when the Senate reconvenes, the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended; finally, there be 2 minutes of debate prior to each vote, equally divided in the usual form; and that all after the first vote be 10-minute votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING MARVIN H. SIMPSON, SR.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Marvin Simpson, Sr., on his nearly five-decade service to the United States Senate and the Capitol Hill community.

Marvin began his career 48 years-ago in the Office of the Architect of the Capitol as a temporary messenger. He quickly rose to a permanent position as messenger for the Senate Office Building. He held many positions within the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, including laborer foreman and the head of the Furniture Division. In 1998, Marvin was promoted to assistant superintendent, Tenant Services Division where he served with distinction until his retirement.

His leadership overseeing paint, upholstery, wood crafting, masonry, sheet metal and furniture branches has been exemplary. Marvin has been called an ambassador to the Senate of office buildings and has provided Senators, our staffs, and the entire Senate family unmatched craftsmanship.

His institutional knowledge and work ethic will be greatly missed. I join with my colleagues in wishing Mr. SIMPSON all the best in his well-earned retirement.

EQUAL PAY ACT ANNIVERSARY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I come to the floor to recognize an important anniversary. Five years ago today, President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Act into law. This important law has kept courthouse doors open to allow women to address pay inequality by correcting a misinterpretation by the Court on the statute of limitations when women seek redress. But the fight for equal pay continues, and we need to take action to fix the pay gap, which is what I want to discuss today.

On June 10, 1963, President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law. This landmark legislation prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in the payment of wages by employers. The goals of the legislation were groundbreaking. It was the first time Congress acted on this issue, addressing what was a real and growing problem as more women entered the workforce. But it has been over 50 years since the Equal Pay Act became law, and since then, a lot of things have changed.

A recent Pew Research study found that women are the primary earner in 40 percent of households today. Additionally, many of these women are the sole earners. But what is often missed in the discussion about equal pay is the impact the pay gap continues to have on these households who are dependent on the salaries of women.

The pay gap results in \$4,000 less per year for working families, and \$434,000 less over a lifetime. Imagine what these families could accomplish if they simply got what they were owed. With the rising costs for child care, medical care, and filling up the family car, these families are held down by unfair and unjust pay policies.

While these are the day-to-day impacts of the pay gap, there are also even greater consequences over a lifetime. The pay gap affects your income, your pension, and your Social Security. Women's Social Security benefits are only 71 percent of men's benefits. The average income for women from private pensions is only 48 percent of men's. The consequences of our inaction on pay equity are following women out of the workplace and further impacting their lives down the line.

For years I have fought for a solution to this—the Paycheck Fairness Act.

The Paycheck Fairness Act builds on the Equal Pay Act to help close the pay gap. Under the Paycheck Fairness Act, employers will no longer be able to retaliate against workers for sharing information about wages. Right now, if you ask someone what they get paid you can get fired. For years, Lilly Ledbetter was humiliated and harassed because she tried to find out what she was making compared to her colleagues. Women will also no longer be able to only seek back pay when they are discriminated against. Under this legislation they are also able to seek punitive damages.

Under the Paycheck Fairness Act, employers will no longer be able to use almost any reason imaginable to justify paying a woman less than a man. And under this legislation, women will no longer be on their own in fighting for equal pay for equal work. This bill includes education and training so women can strengthen their negotiation skills and learn about wage discrimination.

In this country, they say: Work hard, play by the rules, and you will get ahead. We work hard every day but we find the rules are different for women and men. In 1963, women made 59 cents for every \$1 made by men. And more than 50 years later, we have made an 18-cent gain. In 2012, women made 77 cents for every \$1 earned by men. Fifty-two years and 18 cents—that is not rewarding hard work, and it is certainly not playing by the rules.

Today, on the 5th anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Act, I call on my colleagues to join me in stepping up to the plate and fixing the pay gap by supporting the Paycheck Fairness Act. Let's end pay inequity and end the policies that keep women uneducated and unequipped to fight for their fair share.

It is not just for our pocketbooks—it is about the family checkbooks and getting it right in the law books. It is also about the generations of women to come. Let's finish what we started, and let's make sure it doesn't take another 50 years to end pay inequity.

UKRAINE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, in 1991 the free world cheered as Ukraine and other former Soviet republics gained their independence. Unfortunately, Ukrainian democracy is now under siege, as peaceful antigovernment protests have been met with brutal violence.

Over the past few years, reports of popular protests against oppressive regimes have become commonplace. Yet the frequency of such events does not obviate our moral responsibility to stand shoulder to shoulder with freedom-loving people around the world who seek to throw off unjust and despotic regimes in pursuit of liberty, democracy, and the rule of law.

The United States has been a strong supporter of the Ukrainian people's efforts to create a strong nation, built on